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CANADA CALLS ON BURMESE MILITARY REGIME TO RELEASE AUNG SAN SUU KYI

Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) Raymond Chan, on behalf of the Government of Canada, today called on the Government of Burma to release all political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the Burmese democracy movement and Nobel Peace Prize winner. Mr. Chan noted that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will begin her seventh year under house arrest next month.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested by the State Law and Order Restoration Council in July 1989, a year after the brutal suppression of a popular uprising in Rangoon. Although her arrest prevented her from campaigning in the 1990 election in Burma, Daw Suu Kyi's opposition party won an overwhelming victory.

"Burma's human rights record is one of the worst in Asia. It is deplorable that the military regime continues to defy the will of the people, as expressed overwhelmingly in national elections," said Mr. Chan. "Before Burma can enjoy normal relations with the international community, it must demonstrate its commitment to genuine political reform by releasing all political prisoners and embarking on national reconciliation."

Mr. Chan described as unacceptable Burma's defiant attitude in response to the concern expressed by the international community in successive UN General Assembly and UN Human Rights Commission resolutions.

- 30 -

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